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APPROVED FOR RELEASE ☐ DATE:  
29-Jun-2010

~~SECRET~~

## ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

**SUBJECT:** (Optional) Congressman Torricelli's Letter on the Death of Father Carney

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10 June 1995

SUBJECT: Congressman Torricelli's Letter on the Death of Father Carney

The following is a written response to the questions raised about the September 1983 death of Father Carney in Congressman Torricelli's 08 June 1995 letter to Mr. Lake (attached).

1. The Directorate of Operations (DO) has no record on Father Carney after 1987. We have asked the DI to review their traffic during that timeframe, and we will advise if they uncover anything. Re the scenario Congressman Torricelli describes wherein Father Carney was allegedly captured and interrogated by the Honduran military and later dropped from a helicopter, we have no information to corroborate such a story. Our best judgment of what in fact happened to Father Carney is reflected in the 24 August 1988 Inspector General report (IG-14/88), in paras 65-68 which concluded:

(a) The evidence available to the Agency suggests that Father Carney died of starvation in the Honduran jungle and not in the scenario presented in Congressman Torricelli's letter;

(b) The Agency only learned of Father Carney's death after the fact, and had no prior knowledge of his presence in the guerrilla group and had no involvement in his disappearance;

(c) No information was surfaced which suggested active Agency involvement in the planning or execution of the Honduran military's counterinsurgency efforts against the Honduran guerrilla group which Father Carney accompanied into Honduras from Nicaragua.

2.

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Subject: Congressman Torricelli's Letter on the Death of Father Carney

3. We have already provided the NSC a background paper on the 316th Battalion [redacted]

[redacted] FYI, the allegations in Torricelli's letter are essentially a replay of charges that have been raised several times since 1984 and which were the subject of the 1988 IG investigation.

4. At the 23 May HPSCI hearing, Congressman Torricelli raised several alleged human rights cases in Mexico and Central America, one of whom was Father Carney. We advised at that time that we were not familiar with the detailed background on the Carney case or the others he mentioned, and Congressman Torricelli did not ask for follow-up. We subsequently reviewed the material on the case, however, and it has been provided under separate cover.

5. We will advise if we find any additional relevant information when our [redacted] searches on Alvarez, Hernandez and Flores are concluded and when the DI search is finished.

Attachment: as stated

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

OCA 95-0301

June 9, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR 

C/LA

FROM:

BRUCE PEASE *BP*

SUBJECT:

Representative Torricelli

Lake and Deutch have talked about his letter. Please give a copy to Deutch's office. Also, please provide -- by 1000 Monday -- the following:

- Any information since 1988 IG report on the fate of Father Carney?

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- What occurred at the HPSCI hearing Torricelli refers to on page 2? *Use Schneider memo of HPSCI Hrg.*

Attachment

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Declassify on: OADR

JUN 8 '95 14:34 FROM CONG. TORRICELLI.

PAGE.002

ROBERT G. TORRICELLI  
5TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEYCOMMITTEES:  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
RANKING MEMBER SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN  
HEMISPHERE  
SELECT INTELLIGENCEWASHINGTON OFFICE  
1072A LONGMONT HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0005  
202-225-1001  
DISTRICT OFFICES:  
COURT PLAZA  
25 MAIN STREET  
HACKENSACK, NJ 07601  
201-261-1111  
100 FAYT PLAZA  
WICKLIFFE CITY, NJ 07096  
201-222-1100

## Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-5000

CONFIDENTIAL

June 8, 1995

Honorable Tony Lake  
National Security Affairs Advisor  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Lake:

I am writing you to ask for clarification of a very serious allegation regarding the Central Intelligence Agency.

I have been told that the National Security Council was recently informed of a another case of direct involvement by a paid agent of the Central Intelligence Agency in the death of an American citizen.

Father James Francis Carney, a Jesuit priest from St. Louis, served a group of rural peasants in Honduras for twenty years. On September 2, 1983 Father Carney was captured by the Honduran military and taken to a base in *El Aguacate* for interrogation by Battalion 316, the Honduran military intelligence service. On September 16, 1983 Father Carney was flown by helicopter to the mountains above the *Rio Patuca*. Thousands of feet above the mountains he was thrown out of the helicopter alive by members of the Honduran military.

I understand that the orders to capture, interrogate, and kill Father Carney came directly from the former commander of the Honduran armed forces, Gen. Gustavo Adolfo Alvarez Martinez, and that these orders were carried out by Maj. Alexander Hernandez and Lieutenant Segundo Flores Murillo, both of whom served in Battalion 316.

I have been informed that the military officer responsible for the execution of Father Carney was a paid agent of the Central Intelligence Agency. I also understand that American intelligence officials in Honduras were present both at the planning meeting with Gen. Alvarez when the order to capture Father Carney was given, and at the military base in *El Aguacate* where Father Carney was interrogated.

JUN 8 '95 14:34 FROM CONG. TORRICELLI

Honorable Tony Lake  
June 8, 1995  
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At a recent Intelligence Committee hearing I asked officials from the CIA if this information is accurate and if they had indeed informed the National Security Council. They said that they had no information about this incident, nor had they informed the NSC about it. However, I received the information about Father Carney from what I consider to be a very reliable source.

I would appreciate you advising me as to the accuracy of this information, and if it is accurate, what actions the Administration is taking in response.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

ROBERT G. TORRICELLI  
Member of Congress

RGT/sw